

Prayer offered at SFIC Weekly On-line Briefing for Faith Leaders, 18 March 2021
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Most merciful and compassionate God, Giver of Life, Lover of souls, O Holy Omnipotent and Omniscient God, hear our prayers and let our cries come unto you.

Since Your Creation of the Heavens and the Earth, you made humankind in your image. Male and female, you created us in a vast array of colors, ethnicities, and tongues to harmoniously inhabit this fragile Earth, our island home. Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, modeled for us and commanded us to love one another, as you love each and every one of us. But some have fallen short of that commandment.

In the wake of the current devastating coronavirus pandemic, some troubled and misguided persons have chosen to lash out, in fear, hatred, and ignorance, at those different than themselves. Most recently, they have harassed, harmed, and even killed some of our Asian American sisters and brothers, especially the most vulnerable, defenseless, and elderly. Across this country, we hear and see news of attacks on Asian American persons and their property. Most recently in Atlanta and here in San Francisco on Market Street.

We pray to you, dear God: You are strength to those who suffer and comfort to those who grieve. Let the prayers of your children who are in trouble rise to you. We claim your promises of wholeness, as we pray for those who have lost loved ones due to racial violence and those who are ill or are suffering loss and long for your healing touch. Make the fearful courageous, the weak strong, the sick healthy, the broken whole, and make us all agents of your love and reconciliation. (Adapted from A Prayer in a Time of Distress, <https://slife.org/prayers-in-time-of-danger/>)

Finally, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. (<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/prayers-for-racial-justice-and-reconciliation>):

When our eyes do not see the gravity of racial justice,
Shake us from our slumber and open our eyes, O Lord.

When out of fear we are frozen into inaction,
Give us a spirit of bravery, O Lord.

When we try our best but say the wrong things,
Give us a spirit of humility, O Lord.

When the chaos of this dies down,
Give us a lasting spirit of solidarity, O Lord.

When it becomes easier to point fingers outwards,
Help us to examine our own hearts, O Lord....

Racism breaks your heart,
break our hearts for what breaks yours, O Lord.

Ever present God, you called us to be in relationship with one another and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered. In our community, we are many different people; we come from many different places, have many different cultures. Open our hearts that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us. We pray in faith. AMEN.